

**MINUTES
OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CRANBURY, NEW JERSEY
OCTOBER 17, 2023**

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The Meeting of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was held on October 17, 2023, 7:00 pm at Town Hall, 23A North Main Street, Meeting Room.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ryan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and presided over the meeting.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6) was provided on January 20, 2023 of this meeting's date, time, and place, and the agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Ms. Ryan, Chair *2.75; Ms. Suttmeier, Vice-Chair 8.75; Mr. Geier *2.75; Mr. Golisano 7.75; Ms. Marlowe *4.75; Mr. Szabo, Alt I *8.75; Ms. Sawant, Alt II *2

Professionals and Staff Present: Robin Tillou, HPC Administrative Officer

Professionals and Staff Absent: Lisa Knierim, Township Committee Liaison

*Volunteer hours including 2 Hours of Meeting Tonight and .75 Hour Training for the NJ Historic Property Reinvestment Program held on September 26, 2023.

APPLICATION

HPC#192-23 – 15 Station Road – Block 35, Lot 16, Historic District – Fence

Chair Ryan announced that the applicant has reconsidered using the vinyl plastic material for the fence and will be submitting a new application for the fence with a wood material.

OLD BUSINESS

CLG Grant

Chair Ryan advised the CLG Grant for 2023 has been accepted and is in its final stages.

Chair Ryan stated the Richard Grubb & Associates presentation to review survey results at the library can be pursued. Kristen Herrik of Richard Grubb & Associates will present the work they have done for the surveys to residents. The meeting will be open to the public and should be announced in the mayor's update. The date HPC agreed on was the December 5, 2023 meeting. As mentioned, it may be relocated to the library for enough public that may be present and for visual aids.

Chair Ryan advised the State has announced the 2025 (FY 2024) CLG grant applications are now available. When speaking with Lindsay Thivierge, NJHPO, it was discussed that Cranbury can be eligible for the CLG grant for the surveys of the agricultural properties that HPC is currently working on. The grant for 2025 (2024FY) is due on January 19, 2024.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier asked what the max was for the CLG grant.

Mr. Szabo replied \$50,000.

Chair Ryan stated the National Register process for the Cranbury Station Hamlet HD can be looked into for the CLG grant. The guidance she received from Andrea Tingey, NJHPO, was to do a single historic register nomination from start to finish is \$30,000. That is why we are looking to splitting the National Register nomination into two (2) pieces. One being research and then fund the nomination piece.

Mr. Szabo agrees the grant should be concentrated on the Hamlet.

Middlesex County Grant

Chair Ryan advised that it turns out Cranbury does not do matching grants. HPC will be pulling out of applying for the County grant.

Identifying Historic Agricultural Properties

Mr. Szabo stated the intensive level survey for the Cranbury Village Historic District was easier to take pictures from the street than the agricultural properties will be. A letter should go out to the owners of the properties that someone may be on their property during those times and receive a confirmation form the Owner.

Ms. Marlowe mentioned that in some cases people live there and, in some cases, they are corporation owned or people do not reside there.

Chair Ryan advised that the street view is what HPC is concerned of.

Mr. Geier stated a letter should be sent advising them why they are doing the survey in a non-confrontational way and that is to catalog the historic properties. The intent it is not to restrict them on what they can do with the buildings, it is to identify them on the Master Plan.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier asked how many agricultural properties are not assessable to see from the street.

Ms. Marlowe replied most of them you can see from the street.

Chair Ryan stated surveys are done where a portion of the survey is street view, and the rest is research and maps.

Mr. Golisano stated there is more than agricultural properties, there is a church location and a rail yard.

Mr. Szabo stated a list of the properties were sent from the Master Plan to Ms. Marlowe. Ms. Marlowe sent a list of the current owners, and he will compile that into a spreadsheet. Some are demolished and need to be taken off.

Mr. Golisano identified six (6) more properties that are on Station Road, South River Road and Prospect Plains Road that may be a house, but not necessarily a farm. There is one down South River Road that the tax records date in 1786.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier stated that her, Mr. Golisano, Mr. Szabo and Ms. Marlowe will work on identifying the properties.

Cranbury Township Signage

The sample for the proposed signage did arrive at the DPW site and Vice-Chair Suttmeier displayed the samples and what the signage will look like on the pole.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier explained the planned new poles will be 12 ft., 10 ft. due to 2 ft. going into the ground when installed. The reason for the higher poles is due to the worry that vehicles/trucks may hit the sign. The lowest pole will be 8 ft. from the ground. The poles will come black.

Mr. Szabo asked how many way finder signs would be on a pole.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier replied three (3) max. The lowest way finder on the pole will be at 8 ft.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier advised she will now order the signage due to approval of the samples. DPW has agreed to paint the existing poles. An estimate for the painters should still be done in case the paint starts to wear and needs to be repainted.

Mr. Szabo asked if the street signs get hit, will they break as opposed to bend?

Vice-Chair Suttmeier replied yes, the sign vendor explained that it does happen from time to time. The only time they need to replace them is if it gets hit by a truck.

Mr. Szabo advised it is good to have on file who the signage vendor is in case any replacements are needed.

Mr. Golisano advised the vendor should have the signs they are using on file and the diameter of the poles should be checked.

Bike Plan

Vice-Chair Suttmeier advised that she had met with EDAC and Dr. Barbara Rogers as a subcommittee regarding the alignment of the bike plan and HPC signage. The discussion was about the vision of the signs. They made sure everyone had the same territory. The gateway signage was discussed.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier explained a gateway sign is supposed to welcome you to Cranbury and make traffic calming.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier advised you cannot change the bike plan due to it being a Township and County plan. It is meant to let people know you are in a place for traffic calming. The stars in the bike plan provided are the signage that were already approved. HPC should be looking at where the bike plan will have signs and where the historic district is. There will be a sign on Prospect Street and the historic district is five (5) houses down from that sign location. There is no need for HPC to put up a sign if the bike plan will have one there.

Mr. Golisano advised there was an extensive discussion of what was on the signs. HPC should be its own regulated sign.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier feels HPC should have a welcome sign near The Elms.

Mr. Geier mentioned there is a gap on Half Acre Road. And there is no bike plan at Station Road and Main Street.

Mr. Szabo thinks the focus for HPC should be the historic district signs and to let them do the gateway signage.

Mr. Geier stated the wording should be different from just Cranbury to the Village of Cranbury.

Mr. Szabo feels there should be a welcome sign on Plainsboro Road when entering Cranbury from Plainsboro.

Vice-Chair Suttmeier stated there is not one in Hamlet either. She will speak with EDAC about putting signs on Plainsboro Road and the Hamlet. She will speak with Dr. Rogers about the language on the welcoming signs, to put Village of Cranbury as opposed to Cranbury. Ms. Suttmeier will suggest putting up a welcoming sign by The Elms.

Ms. Sawant feels a date should be put on the signage as well.

Mr. Szabo feels HPC should have input for the signage in the historic district.

Mr. Golisano does not feel the location of Main Street having a large sign stating Cranbury is appropriate.

Mr. Geier asked if there are regulations for commercial signs due to Teddy's sign needing maintenance.

Cranbury Station Hamlet Historic District

Chair Ryan advised that everything except for the train depot has been demolished on 2-4 Cranbury Station Road property.

Mr. Golisano updated the Commission advising when he and Chair Ryan had met with the Owner and the Engineer, he was told that they were going to put together drawings that indicated what the train depot would look like with refurbishment.

Chair Ryan has not heard anything yet from them.

Commission Training

Chair Ryan advised the webinar of Back to Basics: A Primer for New Jersey Historic Preservation Commissions for Saturday, October 4, 2023 was cancelled. Chair Ryan was going to present to advise of the process for HPC applications. The meeting will be rescheduled for March 2024 due to looking for a more central location.

Chair Ryan mentioned that the 1-5 Scott Avenue is 3 units, not 4 so they would not be eligible for the NJ Historic Property Reinvestment Program as discussed at the training on September 26, 2023.

Mr. Golisano advised that the training mentioned the tax credits were more for a larger scale project.

Mr. Szabo advised that he will be attending the Rutgers Wood Doors and Shutter Restoration training on November 11, 2023.

2024 HPC Budget

Vice-Chair Suttmeier feels the budget should be more for Cranbury Day in 2024. HPC is going to get a booth and will need supplies for that.

HPC agreed to increase the budget for those supplies.

Chair Ryan will be giving the library her subscription to Traditional Building Magazine. This magazine helps with contact information of contractors that can replace historic materials.

HPC Library Book Inventory

Chair Ryan stated she will look further into the books HPC has donated in the past. The library did state the books received from the HPC in 2022 do have plates on them stating it was donated by the HPC.

MINUTES

September 19, 2023

Mr. Geier made the motion to approve the minutes with amendments. Ms. Marlowe offered a second.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Ms. Ryan, Mr. Geier, Ms. Marlowe and Mr. Szabo
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

DISCUSSION

Ms. Knierim had contacted Chair Ryan to discuss the initiative for “Revolution New Jersey” which is the celebration of the 250th anniversary. The Township had received that Cranbury can register and be a part of the initiative for 2026.

Chair Ryan will suggest speaking with Cranbury Historical Society and they can work together with HPC. Any other input from HPC would be appreciated and can be a discussion at the next HPC meeting.

Chair Ryan stated the Preservation Brief #16 for substitute materials from the National Park Service does provide guidance on decisions for our applications.

Mr. Szabo stated the Preservation Brief advises of new materials that look and feel like the old wood.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Ryan opened the meeting to the public.

With no public comment, Chair Ryan closed the public portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Golisano to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Geier offered a second. By unanimous vote, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 9:00 pm.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed secretary of the Cranbury Township Historic Preservation Commission, and that this document, consisting of six (6) pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting held on October 17, 2023.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name on this day of November 15, 2023.

Robin Tillou

Robin Tillou
Administrative Officer
Historic Preservation Commission